



Fig.2 SST on March 30, 2004

**Mediterranean protocol on integrated coastal zone management: innovative tool for regional governance**

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The Ministerial meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention adopted in 2003 a recommendation to draft the text of the regional protocol on Integrated Coastal Zone Management. Protocols are legal instruments for the implementation of the Barcelona Convention and they deal with specific thematic issues. Currently, there are six protocols in force (specially protected areas; land based sources of pollution; hazardous substances; oil pollution from ships; etc.). The Protocol has been signed in Madrid, Spain on 21 January 2008 by 14 Contracting Parties to the Barcelona Convention. It is expected that, within a year, the Protocol will be signed by the remaining 8 parties as well as enter into force.

Currently, similar institutional and legal arrangement could not be found in any of the world regions. European Union has adopted the ICZM Recommendation in 2001, being short, thus, of adopting a directive, which is a standard EU legal arrangement. This is proof that regulating ICZM at a regional level is an extremely difficult task, and requires parties to be highly committed to implement it. Mediterranean countries have

shown such courage. Many believe that this is the most important ICZM legal event since the adoption of the US CZMA Act in 1972.

The main objective of the protocol is to enhance legal capacity of the Mediterranean countries to regulate coastal development on a sustainable basis, and to assist countries in reducing development pressures in coastal areas of the region (tourism, urbanization, industry, transport, fish farming, etc.). The Protocol is very innovative in its endeavors; it is comprehensive, since it covers all important coastal issues, notably the impacts of climate change and other natural risks in coastal areas of the region; it is proactive; and integrated, since it is bringing together all pending coastal issues.

In the presentation, major activities will be outlined. First, the Feasibility Study was prepared. It proposed a legal document that is stricter than EU ICZM Recommendation, but not strict enough to hamper its adoption and implementation. The first draft of the text was prepared by a working group of legal and technical experts. It was discussed at several forums by a large number of regional stakeholders. In 2005, Contracting Parties decided to establish a Working Group of Experts to finalize the text. It met 5 times. The group worked gradually towards a commonly acceptable text. In the presentation, the difficulties encountered in the negotiation process will be exposed, as well as ways and means how these disagreements were sorted out. It will end with the presentation of the benefits which this innovative regional legal instrument will bring to the Mediterranean coastal areas and their population in the future. The text of the protocol will be presented as well as the guidelines for its implementation.

**Land-ocean interactions in the coastal zone (LOICZ) a joint core project of IGBP and IHDP**

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LOICZ is an international research project involving scientists from across the globe who have been investigating changes in the biology, chemistry and physics of the coastal zone since 1993. Since 2003, LOICZ has expanded its areas of research to include social, political and economic sciences in order to address the human dimensions of the coastal zone. The research